OLC #78-3710

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

NOTCIA
Action
OMB

December 13, 1978

LEGISLATIVE REFERRAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Liaison Officer

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Department of the Interior
Department of Agriculture
Department of Defense
Department of Commerce
Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: Proposed report of the Department of State on Space Policy Act and Earth Data and Information Service Act which Senator A. Stevenson plans to reintroduce in the 96th Congress

The Office of Management and Budget requests the views of your agency on the above subject before advising on its relationship to the program of the President, in accordance with OMB Circular A-19.

A response to this request for your views is needed no later than cob Thursday, December 28, 1978. ORAL COMMENTS ACCEPTABLE.

Questions should be referred to Bill Maxwell (395-3890 ) ~~or to~~ (~~---------~~), the legislative analyst in this office.

Bernard H. Martin for
Assistant Director for
Legislative Reference

Enclosures

cc: Jack Carroll/OMB
Judy Coakley/OMB
Bill Fee/OMB
Bob Rosenberg/NSC
Art Morrissey/OSTP

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Senator Stevenson:

We are pleased to respond to your letter of November 7, 1978 to Dr. Irwin M. Pikus of the Department's Office of Technology Policy and Space Affairs requesting views on two bills -- the Space Policy Act and the Earth Data and Information Service Act. Our comments address the specific questions you raised.

Concerning the goals of the Space Policy Act (S. 3530), we believe it would be useful to consider the United States' goals in space in both near term (of the order of ten years or so) and longer term (of the order of several decades). Space technology has already provided a sound basis for a number of useful applications, particularly in communications and remote sensing. In the next decade these applications should be developed even further in order to increase their utility and make them available to a wider segment of the world's population. There is a continuing need to explore space and thereby add to our relatively meager knowledge of our own origins, our astronomical environs, and our destiny, as well as to provide the basis for further developments in space technology. The objectives stated in the bill, Sections 5(b)(1), part of (2), (4), (5), (6), (7), and (c)(1) through 6 are appropriate goals for the next 10 year period.

In the longer term, we can speculate that technology may indeed make it worthwhile to erect large structures in space useful for example, for purposes of large scale solar power conversion or to support protracted periods of human habitation. However, because there are many unknowns, especially with respect to financial costs and benefits of these activities as well as gaps in the fundamental technical knowledge, we feel that it would be best to proceed in the near

The Honorable
Adlai E. Stevenson, III, Chairman,
Subcommittee on Science
Technology and Space,
Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation,
United States Senate.

term by focussing on providing the technology on which future activities might be built. Therefore, the goals stated in Section 5(b)(2) and (3), we feel, should be stated as longer term goals. Determining the unknown factors and the conditions of economic and technical feasibility of such space activities should be a short term goal.

The US space program is, and should continue to be, an effective and useful instrument of foreign policy. It presents opportunities for international cooperation which has both a scientific and a legal and political dimension. Such cooperation can promote more widespread understanding of US attitudes on a variety of significant matters that find expression in the space program. These include, for example, our belief in the importance of the free flow of information and ideas across national frontiers, and the advantages to be realized by the participation of the private sector. In addition, space technology can provide important tools for the solution of global problems through its capabilities in remote sensing and in communications. Our remote sensing capability can be useful in land and urban management, in controlling deforestation and land degradation as well as desertification. It can also strive to assist in monitoring the world's ecosystem through a capability to locate pollution in the oceans and the atmosphere. Our communications abilities can assist developing countries in health care delivery and increasing literacy. These and other benefits of space can have a significant impact on the quality of life both here and abroad and in our ability to support our foreign policy objectives. It would therefore appear consistent with the thrust of S. 3530 to include a goal that addresses international cooperation and the goals of US foreign policy.

We do not believe ourselves competent to answer in any detail your questions concerning the budgetary implications of these goals. However, we are inclined to think that they imply a somewhat greater level of activity than at present and therefore we would not be surprised if this in turn implies a somewhat increased budgetary requirement.

In regard to the Earth Data and Information Act (S. 3530), we believe that it would be unwise to push today's Landsat technology directly into an operational configuration. Further research and development would be of great importance especially in view of the planned activities of other space active countries. We do see value to having an interim development period as proposed. In our view, it is necessary to coordinate the interests and needs of the user community, the research and development community and the operating entity. There should be explicit account taken of the need for the operating entity to be responsive to the needs of the user community.

Remote sensing and its use in addressing problems of resource management are at an early stage of development. There is a significant value to remote sensing and it has large potential both in terms of economic value and as a mechanism for enhancing international understanding and cooperation. There is no doubt that a number of countries have shown a degree of caution and reluctance in establishing their own programs based on Landsat data. We ascribe some of this caution to the lack of a US commitment to long range continuity in providing remotely sensed data. As other countries enter the arena of remote sensing from space, it is likely that some using countries will rely on them for data. We think this is inevitable, but it might nonetheless erode somewhat the foreign policy value of our own activity.

It appears to us that the most effective use of remote sensing in the solution of the problems of global resource management would demand open access to the data by all countries at reasonable charges. We believe the question of international participation particularly in direct reception of data should be addressed in the bill. It is likely that users, especially those already convinced of the value of such data, would be willing to pay something beyond the mere cost of reproducing the data. However, we are not in a position to offer an informed opinion on what user charges would seem realistic. It is important to bear in mind the policy heretofore enunciated by the United States favoring open availability of data such as that from the Landsat system. This policy is

not favored by all countries, although most countries that have gained experience with the Landsat system appear to support this policy.

The Department of State participated fully in the analysis and development of the Administration's space policy and we believe that it provides the proper framework for a continued evolution of the US space program.

The Office of Management and Budget advises that from the standpoint of the Administration's program there is no objection to the submission of this report.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

November 7, 1978

Dr. Erwin Pikus
Deputy Director
OES/APT/SA
Room 4333
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Dr. Pikus:

I am writing to request your views on two bills -- the Space Policy Act and the Earth Data and Information Service Act -- which I introduced in the closing days of the 95th Congress and which I plan to reintroduce in January 1979. Copies of this legislation are enclosed. Hearings on both bills will be scheduled early in the new Congress.

As the first manned orbital test of the space shuttle approaches, there is a need to define new policies and directions for the U.S. space program. It is my observation that the absence of such goals has made it difficult for both Congress and the Executive to pursue the development of the space environment in a coherent and purposeful manner. I am particularly concerned that we may be sacrificing opportunities for the economic utilization of space and the development of technologies to serve human needs.

President Carter has recently announced a civil space program for his Administration. A copy of the President's proposals and my comments are also enclosed.

I would appreciate your evaluation of the Space Policy Act and the Earth Data and Information Service Act, and any changes you would recommend be incorporated prior to their introduction in January. Your comments should be directed to these issues:

-- Are the goals set forth in the Space Policy Act correct? Should these goals be more specific or, alternatively, more general? Are there additional goals that should be added?

-- Is it realistic to assume that these goals can be achieved with a level NASA budget, assuming that funds now being expended for development of the space shuttle are used for space applications and space science and that the budget is

adjusted annually for inflation? If not, what magnitude of increase is required?

-- In regard to the Earth Data and Information Service Act, is it wise to provide for a period of interim development of operational remote-sensing capabilities, as provided in the bill, and is NASA the best agency to coordinate remote-sensing activities in this interim period? If not, which agency should be in charge?

-- What is your view of the economic value of remotely-sensed data and information to the private sector and to Federal, State and local governments? Will an operational system encourage the aggregation of these potential markets? Is it realistic to believe that user charges can maintain a fully operational system, not including expenditures for research and development?

-- What is your evaluation of President Carter's civil space policy?

I would, of course, welcome any additional comments or suggestions. In order to be available to us in planning our activities in 1979, I would appreciate receiving your response by December 10, 1978.

With every good wish.

Sincerely,

Adlai E Stevenson

ADLAI E. STEVENSON, Chairman
Subcommittee on Science, Technology
and Space